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Moshe Pourad Of 26 Motors: Five Things I Learned As A Twenty-Something Founder





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problem of every human; we all want more. If you are greedy, you will fail because it will cause hatred and trust issues within your business.

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As a part of our series called “My Life as a TwentySomething Founder”, I had the pleasure of interviewing Moshe Pourad.

Moshe understands first-hand the highs and lows of the car industry. Growing up, his father was a wholesale dealer who lost everything during the 2008 recession. After experiencing financial struggles, Moshe took the initiative to help support his family. As a teenager, he started working in the car business alongside his father. From washing cars, he moved up to sales and sold his first car at 15.

Moshe’s early experience in the car business allowed him to view the industry from a fresh perspective, and he wanted to capitalize on its growth opportunities. So, after learning the basics and having a small shop of his own, he decided to transform how people shop for cars. His vision was to create the hottest dealership in New York despite all the doubters who told him it was impossible. Together with Aharon Benhamo and Yosef Ayzencot, they launched 26 Motors, and the rest is history. Moshe has since been the backbone of the business, helping expand the brand to multiple locations by working one-on-one with every department in the dealership.

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Thank you so much for joining us in this interview series! What is your “backstory”?

I have always had a passion for cars. Growing up in Queens, New York, my father was a car wholesaler, and I constantly asked him about cars. He knew everything about cars, from their cost to their gas mileage; my dad was a car fanatic. So, my



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alone the money for food. So, while my dad was trying to dig us out of the hole we were in, I started working at 12 years old to help support my family. My first job was washing cars, and after being immersed in the car dealership industry, it only took me three years to sell my first car at the age of 15. From that moment, I knew exactly what I wanted to do with my life.

I rushed to finish my high school education, finishing 11th and 12th grade in the same year and receiving my advanced Regents diploma. However, after I graduated, I knew the traditional college route was not for me, as my mother was sick, and I needed to help keep my family from financial distress.

I decided to open my first store at 17 when I graduated high school. I took out a credit line on a floor plan for \$600,000 and opened my 32-car auto dealership lot. During my first go around, I made many mistakes as there was a learning curve. I didn't know as much about owning and operating a business as I do today, but I knew a lot about cars. My dealership was open for three years before I opened another dealership that was much bigger and could hold approximately 80 cars. But I hit a rut and wanted out of the car business. I was tired of doing it alone, and there was too much pressure in the industry. Fortunately, that's when I met my new partners, Yosef Ayzencot and Aharon Benhamo, and together, we created 26 Motors.

26 Motors, a full-service pre-owned car dealership headquartered in the Bronx, New York, and we pride ourselves on putting the customer first.

Can you share the funniest or most interesting story that happened to you since you started your company? What lessons or takeaways did you take out of that story?

When we started 26 Motors, we always wanted to stand out and be different. Earlier this month, we were in Times Square creating content for our social media platforms. We had a big photo shoot, right in the middle of Times Square, where we brought out all these luxury and pimped out cars. We stuck out like a sore thumb and definitely drew attention to ourselves with our cars.



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video. It takes a lot to stand out in New York — usually, pedestrians walk around like they're on a mission, ignoring what's going on around them. But this flashy car bouncing down the city streets really grabbed their attention. As they were watching us in the car, I was paying attention to their reactions. Everyone was smiling and laughing, amazed by the vehicle.

It reminded me of why we started 26 Motors in the first place, to be different and stand out from the status quo.

What do you think makes your company stand out? Can you share a story?

When we opened 26 Motors, we started selling affordable cars; however, I quickly saw the demand for luxury vehicles. So, we switched our business model and focused on selling luxury cars, and from there, our company started to grow as the demand for luxury cars increased. With time, we eventually acquired the largest selection of BMWs in the tri-state area. As a result, we had more BMWs than the BMW dealership had in stock. From there, we started acquiring Mercedes and went 50/50 with BMW and Mercedes, then quickly acquired more luxury vehicle brands to sell.

Our willingness to change our business model to match our consumer needs makes us stand out and gives us a competitive advantage. Apart from the business aspect, 26 Motors is changing the automotive experience in New York and beyond. We uphold the fundamental belief in transparency, always putting our customers first and refusing to play into the typical “tricks of the trade” that have tarnished consumers' view of car dealerships.

Our showroom features a lounge so clients can be as comfortable as possible. So, whether you're a celebrity client or an everyday person looking for reliable transportation, you get the whole red-carpet experience with confetti and fanfare when you sign the dotted line. We are not the same. It is that simple.

None of us are able to achieve success without some help along the way. Is there a particular person who you are grateful towards who helped get you to where you are?



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wholesale car dealership career and turned them into my successes. He painted a road map and set me up with the tools to succeed and become extraordinary at what I do.

To this day, my father will call me and try to give me advice, but most of the time, he is wrong with his old-school mentality, but he is a legend. He came to America with nothing and built a name for himself. His entrepreneurial journey is the epitome of building yourself from the ground up. Yes, he failed, but that is a part of the journey. Additionally, it wasn't his fault the economy crashed, but he returned and continued to persevere, ultimately making me who I am today.

Are you working on any exciting projects now?

We are looking to grow our business and locations and, soon, 26 Motors is expanding outside of New York, opening a dealership in Miami, Florida. It's exhilarating but also a big challenge.

We are looking forward to the expansion, but it's an entirely new area and market in which we have not invested. But it is an opportunity to learn how to do business in different cities and states and helps us prepare for expansion into other markets like Atlanta and California. The goal is to grow 26 Motors into 26 stores.

How have you used your success to bring goodness to the world?

My biggest mission in life is to help others, and 26 Motors gives me that platform. Starting from a business level, I give opportunities to those seeking a job as a place to start their career. I give consumers a second chance to buy a vehicle when other car dealerships have denied them due to bad credit. I believe in paying it forward and helping those around you.

I live by the expression keep your nose out of other people's business. Keep your head down and do the work, don't pay attention to what others are doing. You will be amazed at what you can accomplish and how much you can give back when you focus on yourself and your company.



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Honestly, I did not have time to read books. I was busy building my business. However, my experiences in the industry and building a business were alive; it was a raw, hands-on learning experience built with human interaction. It was physical human interaction that taught me everything.

You can only learn so much from a book. Yes, it might give you a guideline, but ultimately books try to instill the motivation for you to get up and go do the work. I believe it is better to talk, interact with people and teach them face to face how to do the job, complete the task, run your own business. Human interaction and fostering meaningful relationships are a way to connect with those in your industry to expand your network, and you can't be taught that or harbor those skills from a book.

Can you share 5 of the most difficult and most rewarding parts of being a “TwentySomething founder”. Please share an example or story for each.

- 1. You Must Be Willing to Make Sacrifices** — When starting your business, you have to be okay with missing family events, holidays, and social gatherings. You have to be okay spending time away from your family or kids. You must be willing to work 20-hour days and show up the next morning prepared to work again. When it comes to creating your own successful entrepreneurial story, there are no days off. You can't just say, “I want to be successful,” to become successful, you have to be willing to make sacrifices to get you there.
- 2. Be a Jack of all Trades** — As an owner of your own business, you must wear many hats. When it comes to business management and leading 150 employees, you must be a manager, a psychologist, a therapist, and a motivational speaker. You have to do anything and everything to instill trust in your employees. You have to create a work environment that your employees are excited to be a part of. As a company, 26 Motors is very hands-on because that is what it takes to create a successful company.
- 3. Investing Helps Build Financially Security** — Money is a significant stressor when



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monthly income. Additionally, it adds long-term security because it is a long-term investment, meaning you can hold it for several years as you wait for it to appreciate.

4. **Put Your Trust in Others and They'll Put Their Trust in You** –Being the founder of your own company means you have to learn to trust people. You must have mutual trust and respect for your fellow C-Suite, your employees, and consumers. If you don't build a business off of trust, you will not be able to succeed. 26 Motors was built of trust and transparency for both employees and consumers. Having trust gives your company a competitive edge in the industry

What are the main takeaways that you would advise a twenty year old who is looking to found a business?

The main takeaway I would advise a twenty-year-old looking to be a founder is you have to be willing to put your blood, sweat, and tears into the company.

1. **Save Your Capital** — When you first get your big paycheck, don't blow it and buy name-brand materialistic items. The secret to wealth is to live like you are poor.
2. **Network with Others in Your Industry** — Reach out to the top business owners and founders in your industry. Ask them questions about how they built their success. The more you learn from those who have been in your shoes, the stronger you will be for it. It is also a great way to create connections and partnerships with those in your industry.
3. **Don't Let Greed Take Control** — Greed is the biggest problem of every human; we all want more. If you are greedy, you will fail because it will cause hatred and trust issues within your business.
4. **Sacrifice** –I heard this saying the other day, “If I change a lightbulb for you and I charge you \$100, and it takes me 30 seconds, you're not paying for the 30 seconds; you're paying me for the ten years it took me to learn how to change a light bulb in 30 seconds.” There is a lot we can do in the snap of a finger. but you are not paying



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We are very blessed that some of the biggest names in Business, VC funding, Sports, and Entertainment read this column. Is there a person in the world, or in the US whom you would love to have a private breakfast or lunch with, and why? He or she might see this. :-)

Not just one person, the list would be quite long. I would like to sit down with industry experts, C-suite executives, successful entrepreneurs and world leaders. I have learned that when you surround yourself with people who are more knowledgeable than you, you learn more. When you have the desire to learn, you make progress and build self-confidence to help you reach your next goals or milestones.

What is the best way our readers can follow you on social media?

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This was very inspiring. Thank you so much for joining us!



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